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Pulpit Preaching

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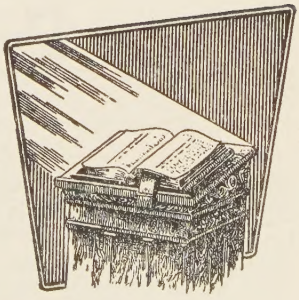

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Dr. John R. Brokhoff, pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Charlotte, N.C., has contributed regularly to **Pulpit Preaching** during the past twelve years and his sermons have been highly commended in letters to the editors. We are especially pleased and proud to recommend his volume of sermons, **This Is Life,** published recently by the Fleming H. Revell Company. This volume, which we trust is the first in a lengthening series by him, includes ten messages, each developing fully aspects of everyday affairs: life in the home and church, life with people and in the nation, life in Christ and in prayer, and the problems and sins of life. **This Is Life** mirrors a mature ministry and faith, and will enrich both the thinking and the preaching of many pastors.

Next month's **Pulpit Preaching** theme will be "The Christian's Witness," sermons on discipleship and evangelism.

———o———

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

The Ministry of Preaching by Roy M. Pearson, dean of Andover-Newton Theological School, offers a rewarding appraisal of the function, content, and manner of sermon preparation and delivery. In a field where so many helpful words have been given, this book is a fresh, energizing, and inspiring volume which will benefit, perhaps greatly, any proclaimer of the Word. Of particular value are the author's discussion of the preacher-people relationship and two chapters,

(Continued on page 29)

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey
The Federated Churches
Lewiston, Idaho

Busy souls have no time to be busy bodies. Austin O'Malley

* * *

One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, speak a few reasonable words. Goethe

* * *

A rolling stone gathers no moss, but it gains a certain polish.
Oliver Herford

* * *

I like that report about the minister who, in soliciting for his church, was turned down by a curt letter which said, "As far as I can see, this Christian business is one continuous give, give, give." The good pastor wrote back, "Thank you for the best definition of the Christian life I have ever heard." Burton Hillis

* * *

We often behave as if God were interested in religion, but not in life — in what goes on in church, but not in what goes on in a mill . . . or a broker's office. Samuel M. Shoemaker

* * *

Whenever you tell another what you believe about anything, and particularly about God, you are stating a creed or confession. It may not be a statement of belief accepted by any church, but for you it is, or should be, an intelligent outline, in words, of the faith that is within you. It is

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Pulpit Preaching

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CHARLES F. JACOBS
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The Christian's America

EMO TO AMERICANS

Charles F. Jacobs, First Congregational Church, Waterloo, Iowa

And proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants.
Leviticus 25:10

t is good to be an American which, ng interpreted, is the right to make amburger in your own back yard, have friends drop in for a visit, to ak without fear of a secret police, l to worship God according to the tates of your own conscience. But must never take these privileges granted. Consider the price which been paid for this liberty. Let tell the dramatic story that lies ind our freedoms.

t is June 7, 1776. The Continental ngress is in session in the Penn- vania State House in Philadelphia, sprawling frontier community of ty-five thousands inhabitants. An rmous issue — the independence the colonies — is being debated. e debate is brought to a focus when hard Henry Lee, delegate from ginia, acting upon the counsel of provincial government, proposes resolution: "That these United lonies are, and of right ought to free and independent States, that y are absolved from all allegiance the British Crown, and that all itical connection between them the State of Great Britain is, and ht to be, totally dissolved."

he delegate from Virginia had own down the gauntlet. Days of ate in the assembly followed, with l action on the resolution being tponed until July 1st. The chips e down; the stakes were high. re could be no dodging the issue; trumpet that would never call retreat had been sounded. Come July 1st, the delegates must vote for or against the proposal.

When news of the proposal was released, excitment mounted, both in the Congress and throughout the provinces. It has been estimated that one-third of the colonists, from New Hampshire to Georgia, opposed this act of rebellion or had grave doubts about the timeliness of the decision. From the beginning a majority vote seemed assured, but it became increasingly evident that a unanimous vote would be essential.

The morning of July 1st dawned, warm and muggy. The proponents of independence spent the day in an effort to convert the opposition and to persuade the delegates who were still undecided. New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina were the questionable provinces. A major event occurred on the afternoon of that day which helped mightily to turn these colonies to the patriot cause. General George Washington, Commander and Chief of the Continental Army, stationed at New York, notified the Congress that British vessels were moving into New York harbor, that attack was imminent, and that his pitifully inadequate forces would be required to avoid disaster. This alarming message brought Pennsylvania and South Carolina over to the side of independence, and New York looked favorable.

Delaware remained the question mark. The colonies sent varying sized

delegations, but each had one vote in the assembly which was determined by the majority. Delaware had three delegates, Thomas McKean, advocate of liberty, George Reed, who would vote no, and Caesar Rodney, long-time advocate of independence, but he was some seventy miles distance from Philadelphia. If he did not arrive to vote with the patriot cause, the Delaware delegation would be divided one and one, and their vote would not count. McKean dispatched a messenger to summon Rodney, but whether he could arrive in time for the vote was a grave question. Winston Churchill, during World War II, when a few brave fliers held off the German Luftwaffe, gave us the inspired statement: "Never before have so many owed so much to so few." That was a desperate moment for the cause of freedom, and I would not, if I could, detract from the heroism of those brave men. But the statement is not entirely accurate. There was another time in history a sick man. Rodney was suffering from a malignancy on the face, and he had been advised by doctors to seek help in Europe. But he would not comply with the urging of the doctors; he was enrolled for the duration in the cause of freedom. Within ten minutes after he received the message from McKean, Rodney was in the saddle and on his way to Philadelphia where, after an all night ride into a blinding electric and rain storm, he arrived in time to stride, booted and spurred, before the assembly and declared: "'As I believe the voice of my constituents and of all sensible and honest men is in favor of independence, and my own judgement concurs, I vote for independence!" His vote cast, this sick man fell exhausted into his chair.

The twelve colonies participating had cast a unanimous vote for liberty. It was a grave moment. Each delegate was fully aware of the penalty should the rebellion fail. King George III had declared every rebel guilty of treason, and the penalty was death by hanging.

Once the resolution had been passed then the assembly must deal with the Declaration of Independence. To save time, in case the resolution was adopted, the Congress had appointed a committee of five to draft a Declaration of Independence: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Roger Sherman and Robert Livingstone. Thomas Jefferson, a tall, red haired Virginian, universally liked, had been put on the committee because he had aroused few political antagonisms and for his ability to write. He was commissioned to draft a Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson lived in a parlor and bed room on the second floor of a bricklayer's home. In less than a month he composed what was to become one of the world's immortal documents. When he had completed the first draft, he showed it to John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. They made a few minor alterations. On June 28th, two days before the vote on Lee's resolution was to come up he submitted his copy to the Continental Congress.

When Lee's resolution was adopted on July 2nd, the Congress turned at once to a consideration of the Declaration of Independence. The critics ripped into it; the debate on it was merciless. John Adams supported the document, but the jibes of his colleagues had made their mark on Jefferson. Modesty forbade his answering but old Benjamin Franklin, who sat next to the author, reported that Jefferson was writhing on the inside. Congress adjourned on July 3rd. The debate would be resumed on the following day.

What kind of a morning was July 4, 1776? It was a pleasant and sunny day, with a breeze from the southeast. The thermometer registered 72 degrees at nine o'clock, the hour when Congress convened.

John Hancock opened the meeting but the body resolved itself into

mmittee of the Whole. Debate nt on until late in the afternoon. he steeple of the State House was iant bell with an inscription from viticus: "Proclaim liberty through- all the land unto all the inhabit- s thereof." The old bellringer had n ordered to be on hand to start ging the bell, once the Declaration been signed. He was pessimistic. aey'll never do it. They'll never it," he said over and over again. oward evening President Hancock umed the chair once more. The ument was read to the assembly. e vote for its adoption was un- mous. Then a boy came out of State House, shouting: "Ring! g! Ring!" And the old bell ringer led the rope, and the bell pealed d and deep. "Proclaim liberty oughout the land to all its inhabit- ss."

The years have been telescoped o eternity, but the sound of that erty Bell is still heard around the rld. Today, as in 1776, freedom— most precious commodity among n — hangs precariously in the bal- e. What must those who love lib- y do to see that it prevails in our d and ultimately throughout the rld?

The fifty-six Signers of the Declara- n of Independence, though dead, ak to us still. What do they say? o begin with, as citizens of the d of the free and the home of the ve, our first obligation is to "pro- im liberty throughout the land and all its inhabitants." We have a story tell to ourselves and to all the rld, a story of freedom and human nity. Frequently we have been itant or half tongue-tied when we e told this story.

But how can we tell the story that America if we do not understand t story? What is it that makes erica a great nation? Many of us, en we try to answer this question, nk at once of our technological su- riority and of our high standard living. We have become what one editor has called a "gadget gourmandized homogenized culture." Now let no one discredit our advances in science or our high standard of living. I like the things of this modern world, and as the poet has said:

I am not indifferent to the things men buy with money,
And I will work as hard as any man ought to get them,
But I refuse to get excited about them,
Or to bow down and worship them,
Or to think of them as necessary,
Or to lose a friend to win a kingdom,
Or to uproot one flower of fancy,
To lay the foundation of a marble palace.

Some years ago a service organization to which I belong, in its well-intended zeal to tell the story of America, published a leaflet which it was hoped would go into the dinner pail of every American and be broadcast abroad. And how did this organization propose to tell the story of America? This organization made the common error of publicizing America in terms of its material possessions — washers and automobiles American families own. Such propaganda does not disclose the greatness of America. Suddenly this nation has been awakened to the fact that our advancements in this field are not so great as we had believed. Reluctantly we admit that Russia may soon be able to equal or excel our country in the mere production of gadgets. And what sense does it make to tell an impoverished world how rich we are, how many pounds of meat we consume per capita, how many cars we own?

The greatness of America can be told only in terms of spiritual values. Woodrow Wilson once said the greatness of America lies in the fact that she is a great spiritual concept. The America way of life cannot be described in terms of national income, standard of living, or military strength. America is a way life in

which the government gets its consent from the governed and a way of life in which the least has a right to be heard side by side with the mightiest. America is a way of life in which we remember that all our actions are under the Providence of God; a way of life in which all men are recognized as brothers and that, regardless of race or creed, "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." That is a great story, and it is our solemn duty to proclaim it throughout the land and to all the inhabitants.

We need to return again in our thinking to the origins of our way of life. You cannot read the story of America's beginnings without falling to your knees in prayer to Almighty God for the heritage which is ours. Those fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence, though dead, say to us still: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants."

II

Hard by the necessity of promoting our way of life is the responsibility of protecting it. With the mention of the word protection one thinks of vast armies, huge navies, great air armadas, satellites, and hydrogen bombs. The awful spectre of military might and war confronts us when we talk about protection. In the context of our troubled and frustrated world, no one of us will minimize the necessity of military strength and the willingness of our people to make the sacrifice that goes with military preparedness. I never want my nation to be militarily weak in a world of such grave alternatives.

But the final protection lies in something more enduring than military power. There is no lasting security in hydrogen bombs, no matter how many we may possess. We can protect our hertiage only by a renewed effort to translate our ideal of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God into reality. These ideas and ideals have been set forth for us in the Declaration of Independence and in our Constitution. Through these documents we have proclaimed our faith in God, in the dignity of the human being, and in the right of the people to govern themselves. We cannot give lip service to these ideals alone and expect them to survive; these ideas and ideals are of God and nothing less than the complete surrender of ourselves to them can save us from destruction.

If we are to save America, we must by deeds as well as by word show to the world our genuine Christian attitude. Dollars and bombs cannot save us, but we can save our freedom if, coupled with our military strength, we practice with an increasing fervor the ideal of brotherhood. Let us humbly admit our failures. Democracy is a long time growing; it cannot be imposed from without or from above; it comes from within a people through experience and education. Now that we know what is required of us to protect our land and its cherished freedoms, let us dedicate our lives to the fulfillment of that purpose. In the end we will not be judged by our standard of living but by our way of life. If we forget that, then all the military might of this great nation cannot save us.

III

Finally, hard by our responsibility to proclaim and protect our way of life, is the obligation to preserve and healthfully perpetuate it. We may argue that if we protect our way of life in this broader context about which we have been thinking that we will thus preserve it. And this is a fact.

But how may we preserve America? We Americans have been used to thinking of liberty as something that has been won for us and passed on to us. In a larger sense, no one can win liberty for us; the best our ancestors could do was to win it for themselves

d to provide for us the opportunity maintain it in our day. In preserv- our heritage we must turn back our beginnings, and reconsecrate services of our minds and our arts to the cause of freedom. herever we live, we must practice mocracy—in the homes, the schools, churches, the community, the na- n. The voting booth must become a rine of devotion, for our govern- nt gets its just power from the nsent of the governed.

My friends, let me put this into ur thinking: all that I have been king about the promotion, the pro- tion, the preservation of our way life — depends upon one thing, cipline. Recently a father told me at he thought the four basic institu- ns of our society are: the home, the urch, the school, and the woodshed. d he is right; for the woodshed is symbol of discipline. Without cipline America cannot endure.

Now there are two ways of getting discipline — from without and from within. Democracy demands that we discipline ourselves from within. We must hold unsleepingly before us the fact that democracy is a government of laws and not of men. If such a government is to survive, it will come through the efforts of men and women who have disciplined themselves from within. If we do not think that a law is reasonable, it is our right and our duty to work to change it. But as long as it is a law, it is our obligation to abide by it.

Mark this down as fact, and let there be no forgetting it: unless we discipline ourselves from within, some day a strong man will offer us discipline from without. Our beloved country can maintain its own strength and be a beacon light to a world in shadows, if it will **proclaim, protect,** and **preserve** its heritage through a rededication of its material and spiritual resources to the unalienable rights of all men.

ECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

Glenn E. Hanneman, First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California

It all began in a committee! Thom- Jefferson, John Adams, Roger Sher- n, and Robert Livingstone were mmissioned by the Second Contin- tal Congress to draw up a suitable cument by which our independence m Brittain could be declared. So, some 182 years now we have lived der, fought for, and sought to grow into the highest meaning of those endid words: "We hold these truths be self-evident — that all men are ated equal: that they are endowed their Creator with certain unalien- le rights; that among these are life, erty, and the pursuit of happiness." It has been good. Our land and we people have prospered to an un- ecedented degree. Yet, it is still a t that one can live in such free- m without actually **being** free.

This truth was most clearly outlin- in John's account of Jesus' conver- sation one day in the temple at Jeru- salem. Jesus had been speaking of His mission to the world, and He spoke with such authority that many believed in Him. But when he said, "If you continue in my word, . . . you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free," immediately some of them said, How can this be? We have never been in bondage to anyone. Then Jesus, with His characteristic perception, pushed aside their political interpretations of freedom to reach for the deeper levels of the spirit. "Truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin." Then He added, "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

This is the deeper issue to be faced in our time. It is not a matter of political freedom. We have that, and give thanks to God for it. But ours is

a problem of spiritual freedom — of being free within freedom. And for this we are completely dependent upon Christ. "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." Let me illustrate what I mean.

I

Take, for example, the matter of values — and the standards by which we judge what is important. Probably one of the most obvious driving forces in America is for success. It is a foregone conclusion that when a young man starts his career, his first objective will be to "get established." He will give his every waking thought to it. It is not merely a matter of gaining "things"; it becomes a way of life which reaches into every facet of his experience. Even the wife and family are caught in it.

The real tragedy grows out of the fact that a whole life may be dedicated to the climb as its ultimate goal; that making a living is put ahead of making a life; that the quest for material security may supersede even the quest for character. More than we like to admit, most of us are caught in a net of distorted values with the result that our generation may well be noted as much for its ulcers and heart attacks as for anything else.

Dr. Samuel Proctor, president of Virginia Union University at Richmond, tells of a man who stands in stark contrast to the general pattern of our day. He is an old mathematics professor in that school and has been on the faculty for forty-three years. He doesn't have much of the world's goods, but he has such a spirit and serenity and quality of devotion that men of all walks in life seek him out for advice. "Whenever I want to get my values set right and make my decisions on the basis of the issues involved," said Dr. Proctor, "I go to see the old professor. More than anyone else he influences us by the quiet, calm, wise faith which is so evident in his life. I would say that he is a truly successful man."

More of us long for that kind of peaceful freedom and quiet success than is generally recognized or admitted. That kind, too, must be bought with a price. Just as our political freedoms were bought at great personal cost, so such spiritual freedom can come only at the cost of putting things into God's order of importance. Christ has pointed the way and blazed the trail to freedom. "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well." "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

II

Or take as another example our desperate need for a meaningful hope. When America was moving into its adolescence, the great hope which claimed men's strength and attention centered in land and what it could produce. Land was seen as the key to freedom.

In 1817 George Flower, an Englishman who helped to settle the English prairie of Illinois wrote: "The practical liberty of America is found in its great space and small population. Good land, dog cheap everywhere, and for nothing if you will go for it, gives as much elbow room to every man as he chooses to take. Poor laborers hear of this cheap land, are attracted to it . . . they come, they toil, they prosper. This is the real liberty of America." And so men believed. But things changed. Frontiers disappeared.

Then toward the end of the nineteenth century we turned to a new solution. Power, to be found in intellectual and industrial expansion was to be the key to freedom. In 1889 Mark Twain wrote to Walt Whitman on his seventieth birthday: "You have lived through the most important seventy years in the history of the world. If you could live another thirty years, you would see science accomplishing wonders, and you would see mankind at last having reached its full stature." Victor Hugo waxed lyrical over it as well. "In the twentieth century," he predicted, "war will be dead. The

ffold will be dead. Dogmas will dead. Man will live!"

So, we have moved from one su-rficial hope to another — gaining wer but wondering what we are ing to do with it. Now, in despera-n we turn finally to religion in the pe that it will be the panacea by ich our problems may be solved. is the key — but not in the way may have expected.

You see, most of our fears can be ced back to self-interest. From the arning for land to the quest for wer, the basic drive has been self-erest. As Dr. McCracken has put "The real root of our fear is that are too much wrapped up in rselves." God has not given assur-ce that the things we are seeking comfort and material success — will guaranteed to us. It is not our aracter. Only when our hearts are ntered on things that really matter n we be free from care and from ar.

This was the power in the man ijah Lovejoy who died at the hands a mob in Alton, Illinois, in the 50's. Lovejoy advocated abolition slavery. Influential and respectable izens sought to silence his voice and mper his writings with prudence. hen his second printing press was stroyed, and he was awaiting the livery of a third, friends counseled thdrawal from this position. But he swered: "Why should I flee from ton? Is this not a free state? Have not a right to claim the protection the law? What more can I have in y other place? You may hang me as the mob hung up the individuals Vicksburg. You may burn me at e stake as they did McIntosh at St. uis, or you may tar and feather e or throw me into the Mississippi you have threatened to do. But you cannot disgrace me. I and I alone can disgrace myself. And the deepest of all disgrace would be, at a time like this, to deny my Master by for-saking His cause."

Make no mistake about it, when a man is consumed by a fear which has grown out of self-interest, he has lost his soul. "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" Do you see the wis-dom of Christ? He remembered God's loving purposes, God's claim upon His life. He understood what God meant for man on earth. He rejected self-interest — and won peace in His heart and life eternal. This is our true hope. "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

Some years ago the newspapers carried a sensational story about a life-term convict who had been grant-ed a parole but would not accept it. Lawyers and newspaper columnists alike argued the matter — "Is he a free man or not? Can he stay in the prison despite his parole?" A terrific court battle ensued which was finally set-tled by the Supreme Court ruling which said, "His freedom was to be had for the taking, but he did not take it; therefore, he was not free." This is the essential issue with which each of us must come to terms in life. We may have political freedom and the right to pursue happiness, but we shall never be free in the deepest sense of the word until we have ac-cepted the freedom offered by Christ. That freedom is not based on the "things" for which men strive, nor the power they would wield. It is hope born of the spirit where men come alive to the knowledge of their need and find peace and forgiveness with God through Christ; where value-es are set in right order and hope is founded on the faithfulness of God.

NOTHING GREAT IS EVER FINISHED

David T. Erickson, First Baptist Church, Arlington, New Jersey

Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor. John 4:38

It is somewhat depressing to say that nothing great is ever finished, and yet it is perfectly true. World War I was fought "to make the world safe for democracy." The Allies won the war, but the world wasn't made safe for democracy. It was and is a great conception, but it is still unrealized, unfinished. The war against the things which harm human society — crime, vice, alcohol, poverty — is never over. We make advances here and there, but the great task still remains.

Nowhere is this more true than in the field of religious work. The same tasks are done over and over, but are never finished. To make a Christian, to become a Christian is always an unfinished business and always will be. While such an outlook may be depressing, it is also a great challenge that is capable of drawing out the very best we have and are. We have the opportunity of entering into the labor of all the great and good who have preceded us in this earthly scene.

Sometimes we marvel at the accomplishments and achievements of the heroes of the race. We think of Martin Luther and the Reformation, of Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, of Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation, and when we go back to the beginning of Christian history we think of Jesus and the twelve. This record of advance in all realms of human endeavor is a great and thrilling record. Often it is spotted with failure and defeat, but nevertheless it is an inspiring chronicle. None of these have been completed, for nothing great is ever finished. This is the challenge: you and I can enter into their labor — if we will!

I

Thomas Jefferson was twice elected president of the United States. Like Benjamin Franklin, he did so many things well that we still marvel at all he was able to accomplish in the span of one lifetime. Born in 1743, he produced in 1776, the Declaration of Independence, when he was just thirty-three years of age, a document which shook and continues to shake the world. He served as member of Congress, minister to France, secretary of state, vice president and president of the United States. He also served as governor of Virginia and as president of the University of Virginia. It was due largely to his efforts that the first law regarding religious liberty was adopted in Virginia. It guaranteed freedom of conscience and relieved the people from supporting an established church. In 1800 he wrote: "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." He died on July 4th, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. For his epitaph they chose these words: "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and father of the University of Virginia."

The America in which you and I are privileged to live is the fruit of his labor and that of others, and of those who have since entered into their labor. There are those who would take from us our religious liberty and set up a state church. A century and a half ago Jefferson saw how important it was that people should be free in conscience. Even before freedom of religion was established in Virginia, it had been practiced in Rhode Island by Roger Williams and his followers. Are we entering into their labor, or are we going to

se our religious liberty by our indifrence?

A generation after the death of homas Jefferson, a tall, gaunt woodsan sat down at a desk and with his narled fingers signed a document nown as the Proclamation of Emanpation. Jefferson had sworn eternal ostility against every form of tyranny ver the mind of man. Lincoln carred it a step farther by dropping e last five words of Jefferson's so s shortened version read: "I have vorn hostility against every form of ranny." Our democracy is not perct — far from it. Nothing great is er finished; it is always in process being perfected. Are we great ough to enter into the labor of fferson and Lincoln and those oths who have contributed so much America's greatness?

II

Many of us have been privileged having wonderful Christian parts, teachers, pastors, friends. Perps many of these are now on the her side, having finished their urse. Have we entered into their bor; are we perfecting our beloved ead?

Lyman Beecher was an influential an in his generation. He held sevral pastorates where he was known an effective preacher. For eighteen ars he was the president of Lane eological Seminary in Cincinnati. e was a good man, but it was his ildren who thrust greatness upon m. They entered into his labor by mbarking upon the stream of Amerin life and altering its course. One his sons, Charles, was a pastor and ducator. Another, Edward, was also pastor and educator and president a college. A third son, Henry Ward eecher, was the pastor of Plymouth urch in Brooklyn from which pulit he helped to shake the foundations slavery. John Hay said of him at he was the greatest preacher the orld has seen since Paul preached Mars Hill.

But that wasn't all, for Lyman Beecher also had two daughters. Catherine was a writer, school principal and an influential figure in her generation. By the time she was thirty-five she had already written three books. But the really important thing she did began when she was only fifteen. That year her mother died and she took upon herself the care of her little sister Harriet who was only four. How many girls there are who have likewise entered into and completed the labor of a mother who had been removed from the earthly scene! Sometimes their sacrifices and devotion have not been appreciated, but that was not true in this case. It appears that Catherine had more influence on Harriet than even her father. Harriet grew up, married a professor of Lane Seminary, cared for a family, and wrote in her spare time. That "spare time" is enough to make one smile. She gave birth to six children in twelve years during which time she took care of most of the household duties. These included cobbling shoes, sewing for the whole family including her husband's clothes, and at the same time being a good wife and mother. And in her "spare time" she wrote for magazine articles which were published and paid for.

Cincinnati is on the banks of the Ohio. On one bank there was freedom; on the other slavery. Harriet saw much of the worst side of slavery, and in 1852 she wrote **Uncle Tom's Cabin.** This book did more to shake the foundations of slavery and to hasten the irrespressible conflict than even the passion and eloquence of her brother Henry.

The sons and daughters of Lyman Beecher entered into his labor. Have we entered into the labor, the hopes and dreams of our parents and loved ones? Nothing is ever finished, but it stops whenever it comes to a dead end in some individual. One of the great tragedies is to see people who have a great heritage and who are content to be dead ends.

Jesus lived, loved, and labored for

thirty three years. His disciples entered into his labor and carried it on or it, too, would have come to a dead end. If they hadn't, Jesus might have been remembered merely as a good man who was cruelly put to death. But because they entered into his labor and countless others since his time have done likewise, the Christian movement continues and the name of Jesus is above every name. Nothing great is ever finished; it is merely, begun and we are challenged to enter into the labor of Jesus and his disciples and to carry on until this earth shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.

The individual life is never finished. It goes on beyond the grave. That is what Jesus said. I wonder if they know, those who have gone before, of what goes on here? If they do, are they rejoicing over your life and mine, or are they broken-hearted over our failures to enter into their labor? The writer of Hebrews almost seems to think they know, for, after having called the roll of the heroes of the faith, he goes on to say: "Wherefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith."

And what is this race, this task, this commission which is set before us if it is not the perfecting of the dead by entering into their labor and advancing it? That is your task and mine, and we can do it if we will look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith — and theirs. Nothing great is ever finished, but it can be advanced by dedicated souls.

B.C., A.D., OR A.C.?

Charles J. Harris, First Community Church, Columbus, Ohio

It is commonplace to speak of our era as the most confusing in human history. It may be true. But one thing is certain: our confusion is only a matter of degree. Complexity, uncertainty, confusion are "eternal" verities." They are perennially with all men, personally and in the communities of man. At no time can one say that an existing condition, decision, attitude, or law will settle once and for all any further problems. The experienced fact is that every idea, attitude, law or behaviour, whether "good" or "bad," has abiding qualities which do not die with the passage of time nor the coming to flower of new eras or conditions. "Qualities" are not subject to horizontal time, but persist side by side with each other so long as the human race endures.

We have an evolutionary way of thinking that history can be divided into eras, dispensations or ages, as if 'ages" fall into place, one after another ,then disappear when something new takes their place. Haven't the pleistocene and earlier ages of geologic history succumbed to the stone age of human development, the golden age of Greek philosophy, the scholastic era of the Middle Ages, the machine ages of the last century, the atomic age and now the solar age? But sober reflection affirms that this kind of thought is not accurate. So-called eras have a way of remaining with us to the present moment.

Last summer my own eyes saw five billion years of the past in the rocks at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Stone age people still live in the interior of Australia, and stone age thinking is probably much nearer home! Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, the Hippocratic oath and Athenian laws are being discussed or lived at this hour. The medieval theol-

y of Thomas Aquinas is being eached and practiced daily in hun- eds of thousands of Roman Catholic urches. The machine age roars out our ears while the atomic age reatens with its fears and the solar e now dramatically appears.

We are a bundle of the past, pre- nt and future. The Gloria Patri of ristian worship speaks truthfully: it was in the beginning, is now d ever shall be.

Now, this principle of vertical ternity" is also a problem in Christ- nity. We say that Jesus Christ is the upreme Event in Eternity," that "He lit the calendar" into B.C., before rist, and A.D., anno domini, in the ar of our Lord. Ask any man for an planation of the real significance B.C. and A.D., and he will prob- ly say: "Before Christ ideas, ought, behaviour and religion lack- the quality of life revealed in im. 'Eye for an eye and tooth for a oth' was the law of primitive venge- ce. Polygamy, crude and cruel ideas God as a wrathful monster, cheap- ss of human life — all these and ore were the prevailing attitudes fore Christ. But after He came to veal to us a new way of life, mat- rs changed. A new quality of life peared, essentially everything that the burden of the New Testament: ve overcomes evil, vengeance is left the loving mercy of God, monog- my is Christ's way in marriage, God's rath is our problem and not His pricious pleasure, individual life is ised to the dignity of sonship with od, and the attitude-principles of e Sermon on the Mount enlarge all mer codes of ethics, including the n Commandments." So the average rson would say we are living in a ristian era, a Christian civilization, th the expectation that God's King- m will come through Christ and s come, in fact, in large measure ready.

Far be it from me to say to what gree this is true or not true: one an is far too finite to measure such truth. But there is a subtle danger in our use of B.C. and A.D. "BC" attitudes did not end with the birth or death of Christ, nor have "AD" attitudes become the way of life for everyone born within the last twenty centuries. This truth is affirmed by every textbook of history, religion, ethics or this morning's newspaper. There are BC minds and AD minds today in every community and congregation! In fact, the two minds quite probably exist within you and me at this moment.

But, as if this were not complicated enough, there is a third dimension which must be painfully spelled out. It is the "AC mind," "after Christ." There is growing in our world an attitude within individuals which is not primitively pre-Christian, nor genuinely Christian, but sophisticatedly post-Christian. It is considered by many to be the characteristic attitude of our so-called civilized world. This spirit considers the pre-Christian temper of man to be crude, the earnest Christian mind to be fanatic, and the meaning of Christ irrelevant! This attitude is prevalent on college campuses, in Communist camps, and in Christian congregations. It avers that Christ has been tried and found wanting! Progress has overcome Him. Palestinian thinking is naive in our kind of world. Christ's truth is inapplicable in UN assemblies. Our vast social problems can't be solved with tidy texts from Galilean agriculture. What can Christ's crucifixion do about the gas chambers of Auschwitz, or the brain-washings of Vorkuta, or the slums of our town. Bank on the UN for the solution to war more than on the preachments from, or about, Jesus Christ! When homes are on the rocks, more families properly troop to court than to church. Even within churches, sad to say, many have convinced themselves that Christ is a complication in religion rather than a "precious help in time of trouble."

I submit that in every problem, every issue of human life, one or pos-

sibly all three attitudes come in to have their say. And in every situation one becomes in practice dominant. All of us are living every life detail in either a curious hodge-podge, or a sure conviction, that involves the BC, AD, or AC kinds of mind. Now, far from undertaking to resolve all the problems raised, I want to explore these three "eternal" minds relating to Christ in two areas that are of much concern at the moment.

I

Integration, or lack of it, has been called the "ugliest problems in America." One thing is certain: it is only Act I of a much longer drama to be unfolded in the future as the vast racial problems of mankind come into focus. In all the welter of opinions and facts, however, there are basically three minds operating. Which will be the dominant attitude for the future?

The BC mind insists that the color-person is "made that way by God." He is inferior and the "facts" prove it. He is, however, a person and "if he keeps his place" he deserves "separate but equal" treatment. It is his color which becomes the criterion of first, and often final, judgment about him. The text which denotes his position for all time is Genesis 9:25-28. Noah, having awakened from a drunken stunpor in which his grandson Canaan, the son of his traditionally colored son, Ham, hardly figured, curses Canaan thus: "Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers . . . Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem (ancestor of the Jews), and let Canaan be his slave. God enlarge Japheth (traditional ancestor of the white race), and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave." Thus the Old Testament mind of the Bible before Christ is quoted frequently as the divine decree ordaining forever the inferiority of the major portion of the population of the world. As incredible as this may seem to some, it is nonetheless taken with utter seriousness by many in our land, and in South Africa. It is exemplary of the BC mind.

The AC mind, however, ignores the Bible entirely. Integration is a problem involving differing racial psychologies, customs, and particularly economics. The AC mind is cognizant of the need for progress; that integration is probably inevitable; but the matter should not be pressed, particularly if one of the implications is the lowering of real estate values. While the BC mind tends to talk of "'mongrelization" of the races through intermarriage, the AC mind feels that it is too hurtful an economic problem to be faced now. The Supreme Court ruling is therefore accepted with a kind of sophisticated fatalism, but to protect important values and valuable "gentlemen's agreements" must be maintained. The BC mind would really like to reverse history and the shape of things seemingly inevitable, while the AC mind would like to freeze it on the basis of reasons only remotely connected with Christ in the Christian Era. Worst of all, some AC politicians are making political hay out of this green pasture of racial tension.

The AD mind considers the problem to be basically religious. Behind it all is the universal problem of alienation of man from man, prejudice a problem common to all men of all races. Underneath all problems of inferiority, intermarriage, economics, etc., is the tragedy of men unwilling to come into real encounter with men as sons of God. This mind further believes that before any other problem can be solved, there must be an encounter of every man with the Living Presence of Chirst. Therefore the price for integration is indeed steep. To love Samaritans, adulteresses and dark-skinned prodigals, to suffer the loss of life and property, to have house bombed and social standing ruined — all this may be the price necessary. But there is no other starting place for "all nations of one blood

to dwell on the earth" in peace. means taking one's place at the el of the Cross and enduring for rist's sake with redemptive con- ion that in this year of our Lord only ultimate answer is to love oss all barriers by the Cross of our d within. The AD mind calls ough the Christian Church for vali- courage to match that of Christ, a amic but difficult way, and for reason, minority.

f the problem, however, is not to you yet, are you praying and wing in a faith that when it surely be you can hear a strengthening rd, "Well done, good and faithful vant, you have been faithful . . ."? ou are brave and really want to nch into the problem, keep close Him, else you may end up in utter pair, or even worse, with a com- ely AC mind that lets Him hang His cross — alone! Of the three ds, BC, AD or AC, which is minant in you?

II

Consider next the problem of the ee minds in today's attitudes to- rd labor.

The BC mind reflects the basic Old tament point of view: work is a se. It is a necessary evil, proof- ed by Genesis 3:17, where God s to Adam, "Cursed is the ground use of you; in toil shall you eat t all the days of your life; thorns thistles it shall bring forth to you." nen I was a boy home on the farm ally believed it true!) Work must endured. Get away with as little t and as shoddily as possible. Leis- is the real dimension meant for n. While most of us, to be sure, like this just before vacation, to e it is the dominant mood.

The AC mind, on the other hand, siders work, vocation, job, to have e to do with any part of the Bible. or is an economic tool. To labor- and various grades of white collar ployees, work has as its primary pose, the procurement of cash! need money; therefore we must work. It is a sensible drudgery, a legitimate, honest way of getting the needed funds for a bewildering variety of needs and luxuries. To still others, however, work is an instrument of exploitation. The AC mind may be in the soul of a union member, executive or the owner of a business, or in the corporation's board of directors, or in the hearts of the stockholders. This AC mind is little bothered with such a "picayune problem" as Christian ethics! Persons are only precision tools to get a job done so that profits will increase. Unfortunately, such haven't heard one of Edna Ferber's characters say, "Money solves any problem except for them that's got it!" At any rate, it should be obvious that labor troubles, past, present and future, stem not from the iniquities of systems, but from the BC and AC minds which act as if Christ had never come or had already gone! There is no law possible to outlaw BC and AC minds, whether in the labor movement, management, or exploitative parish preachers and their church members! They constitute a state of soul beyond the reach of any law but God's!

The AD mind strives to take Christian vocation seriously. It listens attentively to Paul's word that "we are laborers together with God." When a man lets this "mind that is in Christ" dwell in him, he sees labor as God's holy opportunity. He'll measure the size of the job and himself before he'll size up the pay check. He'll ask prayerfully, "Is this job in conformity with Christ as I know Him?" No man can answer for him. If he's too big for a job he'll say so, take the consequences, but keep his soul inviolate. He will seize labor not as an idol of security but as an avenue of holy purpose.

Here, as in every problem, the price may also be high. Sometimes a man may have to endure cross-bearing and financial stringency for the sake of principle. But when that principle is Christ he is convinced he will emerge

"more than conqueror." Again, this is the cross-bearing way of faith but is there any other way, if a man chooses to be a little Christ; when he's been called to the vocation of Christian life?

Before Christ, After Christ, or during Christ, A.D., which? An unknown author of the Epistle to Diognetus, said of the Christians, in the second century A.D., "They spend their existence upon earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the established laws, but in their lives they surpass the laws . . . In a word, what the soul is in the body Christians are in the world . . . The soul is enclosed in the body, and itself holds the body together; so too, Christians are held fast in the world as in a prison, yet it is they who hold the world together." How strong a link are you?

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO AMERICA

F. Barry Stipp, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N. Y.
Scriptural background: Galatians 5:16-6:1.

Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and all those with me who are of the same mind send greetings to you, the churches of America.

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of God our Father, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

I

It has pleased me without measure to hear of the great progress being made in your churches. I have been told of the great temples and buildings you are erecting at great sacrifice and expense to yourselves. And I am told that you are spreading the good news of Christ Jesus throughout your land so that with every passing day your numbers increase with the ever growing number of God's children who come into a saving knowledge of him. For this good news, that warms that heart within my breast, I give all glory and praise to God.

II

I am disturbed also to hear that within the gates of thy church are those who do not live with the Spirit of Christ in them but rather follow the desires of their own bodies while their souls starve in hunger. I am told that these do without shame the deeds of the flesh: that they are immoral, out of wedlock and unfaithful within it; that they are idolatrous in putting the things of this world before God; that they hold money, political freedom, luxury, and self indulgence to be more important than the will of God or the work of the church. I am told that you treat one another with strife, jealously, anger, selfishness, and dissension; that while some live in poverty and slums, racial persecution, and needs of all sorts, there are those within thy church which devote themselves to parties, drunkenness, and carousing.

To hear such things, my brethren, brings grief to the innermost parts of my being, for Christ Jesus our Lord was crucified that we might no longer be enslaved by just such deeds as these but that we might be freed from the desires of this world and the flesh in order to be free to do the will of God. I am sorrowful for those of you who are enslaved to these earthly desires for you shall perish with the grace, for only as we have the same mind in us which was in Christ Jesus our Lord and only as we live with the same spirit in us which was also in him; then only will we know of the hope of eternal life beyond the grave.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no

lf-conceit, no provoking of each oth-, and no envy toward one another.

I have much hope for you, my rethren and the church in America, r it is plain to me that the spirit as worked marvelous things to bring many souls into your church who eek a better way, where they may ave knowledge of God and his sav-ng act in Jesus Christ, but I fear r those within your church who rovoke and challenge one another.

I beseech ye, therefore, brethren, o not challenge one another and do ot provoke one another, for as ye do ese things unto one another ye do em also unto Christ Jesus our Lord. or did he not say that if ye "do this nto the least of these my brethren, e have done it unto me." Live in love nd peace, and do not provoke each ther.

It has been brought to my atten-ion that some of you in the churches f America are nourishing the false otion of self-conceit. I ask of what ou have to be conceited? Can you ree yourselves of the bond of sin, that ou sin no more? Can you create ternal life for yourselves, or shall you erish in the grave? Can you make he lily bloom, or the bird to sing, or he sun to shine above your head?

The procurator, whose name was ilate, found nothing wrong with hrist, our Lord, but nevertheless ashed his hands of Him. He even ried to set Him free, but lest he lose he friendship of the Jews, or Herod, r perhaps have some detriment come o his office and status, he turned our ord over to the crowd to be cruci-ied.

Are ye who wallow in self-conceit ny better than Pilate? You want to e captain of your ship and the master f your soul, and you refuse to let hrist Jesus be Lord of your life. You who are conceited find no fault in im, but your conceit causes you to e so wrapped within yourselves that ou cannot submit to his Lordship ver life, and you wash your hands f him.

Why do you fear to claim Christ as the Lord of your life? Do you fear that it will embarrass you before your friends and perhaps cost you their friendship? Do you fear that the demands of the Lord would cost you earthly goods and money to be given both to the poor and the church? Do you fear that neighbors will scoff and call you foolish? Do you wish to gain the eternal love of God our Father, or to hold fast to the things of this world which shall perish in time?

Do not be conceited in yourselves, for it is deceiving in that you have no cause for self-conceit; and it is fruitless, for what you do will not be the will of God.

As you should not be conceited of yourselves, so you should not be envious of another. Was it not Herod who resented the kingly claims of our Lord and did he not therefore contribute to that great sin? In the days of old, was it not Cain who was envious of Abel for the family inheritance, and was it not envy that caused Cain to do that great sin in killing his brother? Be not envious of one another, for envy has always been course for death and destruction and no good will come of it.

III

I implore you brethren, be not like the priests, nor the mob, nor like Pilate or Herod, for these only contributed to the death of what was good and true and just and all those things which come from God. Do not become a part of self-conceit or envy. And do not become as one who provokes or challenges his brother, but stand over against these things. Let the evil of the world and those who follow the desires of their flesh persecute and crucify you because you stand with Christ for what is the will of God. Blessed is the man who is persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for his is the kingdom of heaven. He who does the will of men shall crucify Christ, but he who is crucified with Christ shall do the will of his

Father in heaven. Be ye crucified with Christ. Beat down and suppress the desires of your flesh and this world, and let the Spirit of God work in you to will and to do that which is pleasing in his sight. You shall recognize those who do this and who live by the Spirit, for their works shall be the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

IV

My brethren in America, I know that of which I speak, for did I not crucify Christ when I was among those who persecuted the Christians? And was I not plagued with earthly and fleshly desires that enslaved, so that all I could do was to satisfy my own self and my own body, and there was no good in me? But when I gave myself to be crucified with Christ I found the bonds of these desires were removed from me so that for the first time I was free to serve Almighty God and declare Jesus Christ as the Lord of my life.

V

With this letter I send you my prayers, and our brethren who are here with me, who have been faithful through many trials and temptations, send you their blessings.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the peace of God be with you. Amen.

Paul of Tarsus
Apostle of Jesus Christ

ARTHUR H. KOLSTI
PAUL S. REES
TAYLOR E. ROTH

Old Testament Personalities

IT THE SUBURBANITE

Arthur H. Kolsti, First Congregational Church, Indianapolis, Indiana

have chosen to call Lot "the sub-anite" at the risk of being a bit air. The fact is Lot was technically uburbanite because he settled on edge of a large city. It is a further t that Lot would have been at ne in the suburbs of any one of modern cities. In him we mark a d many modern trends, traits and racteristics.

ot was a kinsman and follower of raham. Every great movement has pioneers and its followers; every ial group has its pace setters and se who swing in behind. Lot was h a follower of the fashions set others. When Abraham leaves ran, Lot follows; when Abraham s to Egypt, Lot tags along; when raham returns, Lot is right behind n. Whenever we meet Lot in the lfth and thirteenth chapters of nesis he stands in the shadow of raham. Abraham is the man of cou-geous faith out in front, and Lot the sort of man who travels, not der the power of his own convic-ns, but under the sway of a strong-personality. Abraham was a man ject to a heavenly vision; Lot was an open to earthly influence. Lot s a follower of Abraham, not in the se of being a disciple, but in the se of being one who lets others the pace.

Consider some of the shadows of t in our own society. We have rd a great deal about conformity. st of us are open to a host of tle influences that seek to lead in one direction or another. Many us work for large corporations ose policies and decisions influence our personal destinies. We've been interviewed, examined, tested and classified. We know that certain things are expected of us, and we often feel pressure to go along and keep quiet even when we inwardly disagree. Some of us are new to the city and community. We sense both the need to belong and the need to be ourselves. We know the pressures calling us into the accepted patterns of the community group. This is the age of the organization, of belongingness, of togetherness.

Riesman in "The Lonely Crowd" introduces us to the person who receives his signals from the group. Vance Packard has written about the hidden persuaders who seek to manipulate our taste. William White has introduced the organization man and written about both the peril and promise of the new monastic orders of General Motors, General Electric, and the packaged suburban communities that serve as the dormitories of these new orders. The man in the grey flannel suit has taken on the stature of a type in our midst. The very color "grey" seems to be a nice go-along neutral color — not white, not black, a good neutral grey. This is the day when the individualist, the dissenter, the deviate, is often penalized by the group.

In all that has been written there is no doubt a great deal of truth and a great deal of exaggeration. No one can doubt the pressure on the individual to conform. The word "controversial" when applied to an individual today is a negative label. There is a wide spread feeling that if a person

or subject is controversial, both are to be evaded like the plague. Yet isn't the very substance of a free society the free marketplace of ideas where opinion can clash with opinion in the quest for truth? The health of a democracy depends upon a people willing to grapple with ideas and willing to listen to speeches they do not like and to read books with which they do not agree.

Big corporations and big organizations are here to stay. Our problem is that of finding a way to preserve individualism within the organization. Management needs to realize they cannot cultivate an average mediocrity without ultimately hurting their organizations. As a nation we cannot drown controversy in a mass of inertia without injuring the very fiber of a free society. As individuals we cannot blindly follow the group without losing our inner respect for ourselves.

The answer lies somewhere within us. Lot went along because he was upheld by no real personal faith or conviction that he could rightly call his own. "Walk in the freedom wherein Christ has set you free," said Paul. Part of that freedom is the emancipation to be ourselves in this world. The person who finds his approval in the love and power of Christ will not need the sanction of the crowd. His failure to be accepted by a particular fraternity or particular social set will not be considered by him as a judgement of his own worth. He will not be indifferent to what others think or say, but he will find inner strength to evaluate crowd opinion in the light of his own convictions.

When Lot and Abraham return from Egypt, an argument arises between their respective herdsmen. This dispute sorely tries the heart of Abraham: "Let there be no dispute between me and thee." They decide to separate and thus resolve the conflict. It is always regrettable to see friends come to a parting of the ways, to see divisions within the household of faith. In this case, it seemed the best thing for Abraham was now free to rise and follow the lure of his horizons. As one reads this story he gets the impression the argument gave Lot a sought — after excuse to go his own way. They surely could have patched up their differences, but often apparent reasons are not the real reasons. When the eastern churches separated from the church of Rome, the surface reason was an argument over the date of Easter. Historians tell us, however, the real reasons had been building up for years in competition between Rome and Constantinople.

In the act of separation, Abraham shows his magnanimity. Sweeping his hand over the land, he said to Lot, "Take your choice." Lot, not gracious enough to defer, saw his chance and took it. He selected the fertile hills toward Sodom. He had not acted evilly, but he had acted ungraciously.

So Lot moved to the well-watered suburbs of Sodom. When next we meet him, we read, "He sat in the gate of Sodom." Evidently he had done well — seats at the gate were reserved for the leading citizens. about Lot; he was settled down. Hence, we get to the heart of things When you read these stories of Abraham and Lot the verbs are of interest. Of Abraham we read, "Abraham journeyed . . . travelled . . . went." Of Lot we read, "Lot sat . . . stayed . . . lingered." Lot was the man who settled down in the world.

Sodom was a preverse city. Lot comes out fairly well in any comparison with the citizens of Sodom. As long as we look at Lot when he is with Abraham, our eyes are naturally drawn toward the patriarch and the defects of Lot glare at us. Apart from Abraham, among the people of Sodom, we see Lot in a different light. He appears as a rather decent sort of chap. He is, in effect, a solid citizen; he is in no trouble with the authorities or his fellow citizens. This is just the point about Lot: he's a decent sort of citizen. He pays his bill,

t never anyone else's; he gives oth- their due, but never rises to the ights of generosity; he does nothing ll, but he does nothing particularly od; he does not descend to the pths of Sodom, but neither does rise to the heights.

A certain reputable man died and und himself wandering around in e universe. He reached the pearly tes where he was refused admission St. Peter. He protested and St. ter asked, "What have you done merit entrance here?"

"Well," replied the man, "I haven't ne any particular good but neither ve I done anything bad."

"That isn't good enough to open e door. Be on your way," said St. ter.

So the certain reputable man found mself wandering in the universe a cond time, and when he saw the ow of the gates of hell in the dis- nce even that represented refuge.

But the devil asked, "What have ou done so that you seek entrance re?"

"I have been neither good nor bad," e wanderer answered.

"You can't come in here," said the vil. "Go back to earth, do some- ing good or do something bad, but, r heaven's sake, do something!"

Here was a man like Lot — not bad ough for hell, yet not good enough r heaven. Dante in his "Inferno" lled these "the opportunists" and laced them in a special place in his scription of hell.

These are the nearly soulless whose lives concluded neither praise nor blame. They are mixed here with that despicable corps of angels who were neither for God nor Satan, but only for themselves.

The High Creator scourged them from heaven for its perfect beauty, and hell will not receive them since the wicked will feel some glory over them.

III

Such a man was Lot when he set- tled in Sodom. He did essentially two things. First, he compromised his ideals. Certainly some of Abraham's vision must have rubbed off on him at one time, but Lot did not care enough about high ideals to pay the price of present discipline.

Lot adjusted to the world as it was. Any person living near a big city falls prey to the same temptation. We get to accept the status quo, shrug and say: "Well, that's New York for you," or "That's Chicago," or "Every city has its problems." "Adjustment" has been a key word in our vocabulary. The well-adjusted man is often pictured as the ideal man, but there are some things to which an individual cannot adjust without peril to his own soul. "Be ye not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds." This is the Christian imperative.

But a good many of us are content to adjust to the times. A sort of inverted Pharisaism prevails in many quarters. How often have you heard someone preface his remarks with the words, "Now, I'm no saint, but . . ." or "I am not a religious man, but . . ." This is the tendency, not to rise higher, but to remain at a common level. The old Pharisee may have prayed, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men." The modern Pharisee prays, "Lord, I thank thee that I am just like everyone else." So Lot sought to adjust to the world.

Then, second, Lot sought to avoid all responsibilities. He was grabbing today with no thought about tomorrow. Even when the judgment of Sodom was impending and Lot was commanded to go to the mountain, he just went a little further to the city of Zoar. His flight from Sodom and later to Zoar had a familiar ring about it. Lot was escaping his involvement in life. Lot's flights have about them something of the mood described by Louis Gannet in commenting on the exodus from the cities.

"To an increasing degree we evade our responsibilities as cit-

izens of the city, grumblingly leaving the bosses in control, but we accept no new responsibilities in the country. So the cities remain in the hands of the machines, and the countryside gently loses its inner fibre. We lose something of our moral fibre ourselves. In fact, I no longer quite belong either to the country or to the city. I accept no deep responsibility anywhere. And there are dangerously many like me in the United States. The tide of city dwellers moving to the country has about it its sinister, isolationist aspects."

Or consider this quote from the journal of John Evelyn in 1666, during the great plague and fire of London:

"Blessing and adoring the distinguished mercy of God to me and mine, who in the midst of this ruin, were like Lot, in my little Zoar safe and sound."

Too many want to be safe and sound in some little Zoar. A young man said, "I want a depression — proof niche. That's why I want to work for A.T.&T. Depressions may come and depression may go, but there will always be an A.T.&T."

Can't we comment here, also, on the life of our church? We are at a crucial stage in our history. We can develop in one of two ways: we can become a cozy, quiet little group pursuing quiet ways here in pleasant surroundings, or we can endeavor to become a living, serving, concerned segment of the body of Christ. This excerpt is from a letter written more than a hundred years ago by the Rev. James Morris Whyte to his son, then a divinity student at Yale:

"But to be a minister, comfortably settled over a comfortable people, with a nice comfortable salary, with no ideas of what mankind is doing save what comes through some comfortable, conservative religious newspaper, that is not only behind the age, but behind all ages. With no charities save those doled out through a few comfortable, safe societies, that once a month take their collections by appointment, with no thought save to get through the world with ease, without rapping the knuckles of anyone who happens to be respectable . . . rather than see you such a minister . . . I would see you a hewer of wood and a drawer of water."

Let us bend every effort to see that neither of us fits this description.

In fleeing from Sodom, Lot's wife was turned to a pillar of salt. She stopped to look back to days of ease in Sodom and she froze in one place. When we long for the good old days and refuse to face actualities of the present moment, there is a great possibility that we could just freeze in one spot.

IV

From Zoar, Lot fled to a cave in the hills. The closing scenes in his life show clearly the working out of the divine judgment upon Lot. The narrative reveals a decadence in his family greater than one finds in the plays of Tennessee Williams. In the last glimpse we have of him, Lot sits in his cave looking out at the world and history passes him by. The camera shifts to the ongoing story of Abraham.

Running through the stories in Genesis we mark the steady threat of judgment. The victory given to those willing to pay the prices represents discipline and struggle. Lot, who wants to settle down, is passed by. Esau, who sells his birthright for a mess of pottage, is robbed of his destiny. These men are not evil men, much about them is attractive, but they just do not measure up.

If we were to select a word of Jesus for the story of Lot, it would be this: "Except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the Kingdom of God."

It is not enough to be a solid citizen

to be conventionally good. We are led to a righteousness that digs deeper, stretches further and reaches higher. As long as we compare him to the Sodomites, he looks fairly good. In the presence of Abraham, he see his true stature. So the Christian might compare himself to others: Well, I'm not so bad. I don't get drunk. I don't beat my wife. I am not like some we read about in the papers." But he should not measure his stature in terms of others but in terms of Christ. When we look at others, we might say, "I am not so bad." When we look at Christ, there is only one answer: "God have mercy on me, a sinner."

WHEN THE GRIP IS GONE

Paul S. Rees, First Covenant Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Lot went out and spake unto his sons-in-law . . . and said, Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city. But he semed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law. Genesis 19:14

If people do not take seriously what you say to them about God and the affairs of the soul, it may be because they see too clearly the white light of all you stand for and they are simply unwilling to receive it. Certainly this was true in the life of Jesus. Some mocked Him for the simple reason that the immaculate sword of His presence and truth had wounded their pride. When He lived them out of their comfort, they laughed him out of their court.

But there is sometimes, alas, a very different reason why men refuse to take us seriously when we talk to them of the higher, eternal things. It is because, for a long time, they have seen no connection between the way we piously talk and the way we practically live. We have no grip on them such as comes from a great strength of conviction they have felt in us and the certain consistency of conduct they have seen along the way.

This — precisely this — was the unhappy case with Lot, the man who loved God a little but who loved the world a great deal more. He had come, more and more, to feel at home in Sodom. To be sure, there were occasions when the grossness and beastliness of the city's vice gave him a momentary shuddler, but in the main he learned to get on very well with the Sodomites.

Then, one day, came the messengers of God. Sodom is ripe for judgment, they warned. There's no time to lose. Lot and his people must take to the hills if they do not want to perish in the flames.

At that, Lot was really excited. He broke out of his Fool's Paradise. He began doing some missionary work. For the first time in a long while he was in dead earnest. "Look," he exclaimed to his sons-in-law, "we've got to get out of this place, and quick. It's a doomed city. God is ready to let it have its fill of the iniquity it has chosen. Let's run!"

They looked at him, half amused, half perplexed. "Dad, what have you been eating — or drinking? Lie down and take a good nap. Your nerves are all on edge."

"Listen, boys, I'm not joking," protested Lot. "This is nothing to fool about. We've got to get out of Sodom or we're done for!"

"Dad, quiet down! All these recent meetings of the City Council and these big real estate deals you've had have been too hard on you. Get a good rest this afternoon. So long! We'll see you tonight after the dance — or tomorrow morning!"

And there you have the tragedy of a man who, having lost his grip on God, had lost his grip on people. Whatever moral convictions he had

left were so contradicted by his personal conduct that they were all bleached out into something pathetically unimpressive.

I

From this case history it can be seen, for one thing, that **we gradually lose grip but we suddenly come upon the consequences of our loss.**

Lot's very presence in Sodom was the result, not of some sudden and momentous decision, but of a process of drift and decline that had been going on for a long time. In Genesis 13 we see this ambitious young nephew parting company with his uncle, Abraham. He elected to dwell in the lushness of the valley, while Abraham hugged the heights. Even in the valley there were good cities and bad. Sodom was the worst of them. Lot kept moving from one to the other, always a little nearer to Sodom. The chronicler, in Genesis 13:12, tells us that he "pitched his tent toward Sodom."

Here are three snapshots by which you may plot the downward progress of this pathetic man:

Lot **looking** toward Sodom!
Lot **leaning** toward Sodom!
Lot **living** in Sodom!

As searching and significant a question as you can ever ask yourself is this: Which way is my life headed? What direction does it face? What is the slant of my soul?

Later in the Old Testament we read of another young man, Daniel, that he "opened his windows toward Jerusalem" (Daniel 6:10). Daniel was in Babylon, but he didn't want to be there; his soul leaned out toward the Holy City. Lot was not in Sodom, but he wanted to be; his soul was leaning Sodom's way. His finally landing there should have been no surprise to anyone.

Have you ever sat in the cab of a railway locomotive watching the track ahead? The safety of everyone on the train depends on the consistency with which those steel rails remain true to their gauge — exactly 56½ inches apart — mile after mile. Suppose those rails began to grow wider apart. Not much — say one-tenth of an inch each mile. At first you couldn't see it. For a few miles the train would speed along as though nothing were wrong. But just let those tracks continue to widen by these small fractions of an inch, and the wreck of the train is sure. Mathematically indeed you could project those slightly spreading rails to infinity, and have them as far apart as the two sides of the Milky Way.

If you don't want to lose your grip, then watch the drift and direction of your life. The small things that work slowly — keep a sharp eye for them. The little insincerities in the words that you speak. The small liberties that you take with truth, shading it here, coloring it there. The trifling increases in your tendency to gossip, to waste your own time and the time of others in pointless talk about other people's business. The inch-by-inch growth of a "wise-cracking" mentality, usually under the delusion that you have a reputation for it which you must maintain. The tiny leaks in that built-in dike of modesty and chastity through which, as time goes on, there pours an enlarging stream of impure thinking, impure speaking, and impure acting. The small dishonesties in business that tend so fatally to become big ones. The creeping paralysis of your generous impulses, so that the older you get, without your even realizing it, the stingier you are with your family, your Church, and your God.

If there is any law of life on which you can depend, it is the law according to which these small, obscure, slowly deevloping vices will one day, perhaps with terrifying suddenness, come home to you.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman used to tell of the day when a rather seedy looking man slipped into an afternoon service at a church where evangelistic meetings were in progress. Near the close of the hour he got to his feet

asked the leader if he could say
ord. Permission granted, he start-
in: "This is my father's church,"
he. "He was an officer here.
at was his pew. With six other boys
as in a Sunday School class here.
r Sunday School teacher used to
e us in her home on Saturday
ernoons. She taught us to play
ds. We forsook the Sunday School.
the seven boys three of them are
rison for life; and, sir, if the offic-
of the law knew that I was
e, I would be arrested." He paus-
Then concluded with this: "All
ave to say is that I would to
d my Sunday School teacher had
a different influence!" The man
ed and was gone. But by now
re was a woman on her feet. With
oice choked with emotion, and a
dy so staggered by the effect of
all that she quickly sank into her
t, she said: "My God, I am that
cher!"

Long years before, the grip had
ne out of her life. And when it
, no matter how correctly or
olically she taught her lessons, she
emed as one that mocked."

Let's face it: we gradually lose our
d but we suddenly come upon the
nsequences of our loss.

II

Consider this too: **we inevitably lose
ip when we complacently treat the
re-warnings of our loss.**

It's a long leap from Genesis 19 to
hesians 5, but I want to take it for
instant. Recall Paul's word to the
hesian Christians: **"Let your lives
living proofs of the things that
ease God, Steer clear of the activ-
es of darkness; let your lives show
contrast how dreary and futile
ese things are. (You know the sort
things I mean — to detail their
cret doings is really too shameful.)
r light is capable of 'showing up'
erything for what it really is."**
phesians 5:9-13, Phillips). The Au-
orized Version has it, "All things
at are reproved are made manifest
the light."

Paul has no doubt about it: God can be counted on to warn us, and rebuke us, and discipline us. No child of the father ever backslides, loses grip, becomes a contradiction of the very faith he professes, without due warning. The red lights flash. It is ours to take notice of them.

There's your **conscience.** Lot had it as part of his soul-equipment. You have it as part of yours. Remember that what you keep telling your conscience your conscience, after while, will begin telling you. Have you put your conscience in Jesus Christ's care for Him to keep it sensitive, or have you put it in the Christless world's care for the world to deaden it?

Lot didn't reach Sodom and become one of its leading citizens until he had run a whole row of red lights that conscience had set flashing.

There's that friend, who sometimes becomes the warning voice of God when we are in the process of losing grip. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:6). A warm-hearted Christian man was motoring along with a friend in Colorado. The two men had not been together for some years. It pained the keen Christian to find that his friend, once a zealous Christian himself, had grown prosperous and spiritually negligent. At one point in the conversation the wealthy friend said, self-defensively, "You see, I no longer take any stock in the old-fashioned teaching of hell." To which his companion replied, after a pause: "George, I've often noticed that the looser a man gets in his living the less likely he is to believe in hell!" It was a center-thrust, and left the man silent with his thoughts! Yet he did not re-surrender his life to God.

And there's the warning ministry of Scripture. If a man has known anything of the Holy Bible at all, the Spirit of God will speak through it in tones that resemble nothing so much as alarm bells. King Saul was on the spiritual decline when he

heard the alarm: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:15). Peter was losing grip when he heard the warning: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31).

Somehow or another, you see, God waves the red lantern when we are losing grip. We do not go headlong into trouble till first we have gone heedless of the roadblocks that a faithful God has thrown up to halt us.

III

Looking at Lot once more, there's a third declaration to which your assent is invited: **we have not hopelessly lost grip if we humbly and honestly acknowledge our loss and receive the renewing grace of our merciful God.**

There isn't much to be said for this pathetic man. This sad chapter of Genesis gets sadder as it unfolds. In verse 30 we are told that Lot "dwelt in a cave." As the chapter closes, and he disappears from the Genesis record, he is in a state of drunkenness. It's a wretched picture.

But let this at least be said for Lot: he got out of the doomed city. He lost virtually everything — including his influence over his own relatives — but he did listen to God's warning. He did take notice of the fate that threatened him in the city. He did seize his one chance of safety.

Fortunately for Lot, he had an uncle who never gave up praying for him. Let verse 29 give you a new respect for the value and power of intercessory prayer: "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow." Lot, my dear fellow, listen to that! **You** didn't deserve to be saved. **You** had it coming to you — this loss and panic and doom. But for Abraham's sake—much more than for yours — God gave you your chance. You should have been far more thankful than you were.

What now of ourselves? Has the grip gone out of our lives? Then no good will ever come of denying it. Let's face it. Face it with **God.** The failure is supremely against Him. Let Him speak the renewing word of forgiveness and strength. "I will heal their backsliding," He says, "I will love them freely" (Hosea 14:4).

Face it with **others!** You have been a stumbling-block to them. They pay little heed to your piety because they know it has no depth. It is high time some of us shallow, inconsistent professors of Christ got in the clear with those who know us best.

For here is the inescapable fact: you and I, in the eyes of others, are either **confirming** the faith of Christ or we are **contradicting** it. We are either Christ's **authentication** or we are His **repudiation.** We are either His **seal** or His **shame.**

WHEN NOAH WENT TO PIECES

Taylor E. Roth, Stratford Street Baptist Church, West Roxbury, Mass.

Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planed a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and became drunk. Genesis 9:20-21

Long ago when the world was young there lived a man named Noah. It was a time of expanding population. Marriage was popular. Unfortunately, so was evil. Men were dreaming up all kinds of bad plans. There must have been juvenile delinquency. And when God looked over his whole creation, his heart was saddened to see his work deteriorating so badly.

A little girl asked an old man, "Who made you?" "Why, God made me; God made us all." The little girl looked into her mirror, back at the old man, and in wonderment said,

yl He's turning out better work
v, isn't he?"
ut God wasn't so sure his work
getting better. He thought it was
ng to pieces. And he was going
wipe it out.
ust then he spied Noah. "There's
ood man!" he said, sighing in relief
t all was not spoiled. "At least that
is righteous and blameless in his
eration." So God went to Noah
talk things over. "Noah," he said,
want you to build a big boat. Call
n ark. Make plenty of rooms. And
keep it from leaking water, cover
nside and out with pitch. I'll give
the whole blueprint, Noah, and
want you to get to work because,
en you're finished, it's going to
n. I don't mean a drizzle, and I
n't mean a few drops! Real rain.
d get your whole family inside,
get two of every kind of animal.
d take plenty of food."
Noah did as he was told. The rain
me. The ark floated as high as the
hest mountains, while all the life
the earth perished from drown-
g. But finally it let up. One day
ah and his family and all the ani-
ls stepped out on dry land. Noah,
ieved and grateful, built an altar
d offered a sacrifice of thanksgiv-
.

Suddenly we catch a vividly con-
sting picture, for the righteous
ah, uncovered disgracefully and
oaning incoherently, now lies on the
or of his tent. He had let down,
me to pieces and gotten drunk. He
a hero with feet of clay — a special
vant of God, suffering perhaps
m "post-flood reaction."
At least this much is plain in the
ry of Noah: even good people go
pieces. Overconfidence in our own
rength may be deadly. So we ask
o questions: What causes people,
cluding good people, to go to
ces? How can we prevent it from
ppening?

I

People, even good people, go to
ces because of pressures. There are all kinds of them. No place seems free of them. There are the pressures to succeed, pressures of money, pressures of time payments. One man has said, "We drive our mortgaged cars over bond financed roads with credit-card gasoline in order to be on time for supper in our home on which we owe $10,000." Add to that the pressures of family, job, and maintaining an appearance — and it's no wonder people go to pieces.

People go to pieces because of a loss of purpose for living. Ralph Barton left a suicide note explaining that, while he had had few real difficulties in life and an exceptionally large list of friends, that the pointlessness of life had taken over. "I have run from wife to wife, from house to house, from country to country in a ridiculous effort to escape . . . I did it because I am fed up with inventing devices for getting through twenty-four hours a day."

People go to pieces because they no longer believe in the reality and power of love of neither God's love nor man's. The life of Lillian Roth, the actress, led into a pit of alcoholism. At one point, she said to herself, "Lillian, you are nothing. You are less than nothing. There's nothing to you or about you worth saving." That happens to a person who ceases to believe that God loves us, not because we are good, but because we are his. If you can't believe in the love of God, how can you believe in the love of man? And without love, life goes to pieces.

Pressures and strains, boredom and loss of purpose, and the inability to believe in God's and man's strengthening love: such things cause life to crack at the seams and fall apart.

II

How can we prevent all this from happening?

One thing which keeps life from going to pieces is a renewed sense of duty. The faithful acceptance of the tasks God has assigned us in the work of the world can keep our lives

together. A mother, who had had a large family and unending pressures, was asked how she had kept from a nervous breakdown. "Because," she said, "every time I was about to start having one, someone was asking for dinner."

James Stewart recounts the story of Josephine Butler, one of the nineteenth-century's heroines and friends of broken womanhood. How did she get started? When she came home one day from a journey, her only daughter was watching her from a window. As her carriage came into the yard, the child ran to the balustrade, lost her balance, and fell, dying at her mother's feet. That day life went to pieces for Josephine Butler.

But at last she turned to an old Quaker lady who told her that God had taken this object of her love from her, but that there were others who still needed that mother love. She sent Mrs. Butler to a certain residence where young girls who had gone morally astray were being nurtured with Christian sympathy and love. That became her life work, a labor of love which established her as one of the great social reformers of the century. It began precisely at the point where her life seemed to have gone to pieces. It was duty that held her.

Another thing which keeps life from going to pieces is a fresh sense of the purpose of life. Of course, the problem today is that some people find it difficult to believe that life does hold purpose. They think that modern knowledge and scientific discovery make life purposeless.

A biologist at Yale, Edmund W. Sinnott, speaks of the strange sense of purpose which runs, not only through the life of man, but through lower forms of life as well. He starts with the simplest of things, protoplasm, the mysterious material in living cells which is much the same in all organisms from bacteria up to man. The thing that biologists cannot understand, but can only wonder at, is the purposefulness of this protoplasm. "The protoplasm seems to have a goal," he says. "It knows what it wants to do. Starting with the single small blob in a fertilized egg cell, it inexorably grows to a special form . . . . Inert, unorganized matter flows into the growing organism and is at once transformed by the touch of its life. It becomes alive; it creeps or flies or sings or loves. When matter is touched by man's protoplasm, the kind with the highest purpose, it becomes extremely complicated, with thoughts and aspirations that defy scientific pinpointing."

There is purpose in life, and by faith we can know it. We can discover our very own purpose. The best way I know of finding it, if we do not already know it, is by exposing our lives to the life of him in whom purpose is most sharply seen and truly lived; by coming to know Jesus through the Bible and the fellowship of Christians; to live with him. Then his purpose becomes our purpose, and we have an inner brace to ward off the blows which make life fall to pieces.

A final thing which keeps life from going to pieces is a rediscovery of God's love. Lewis Mumford, who is not usually considered a man of faith, writes that "love is the key to the apparently locked doors of the age." Love, indeed, is the key to wholeness of life.

Lillian Roth said to herself that she was nothing, even less than nothing. What saved her? Her husband, who, as she says, gave her a love "beyond her worth." We have a God who gives to everyone, who will take it, a love beyond his worth.

The head of the Massachusetts Mental Health Center tells about a schizophrenic mental patient at Rockland State Hospital. That patient, who recovered, said later, "My healing began when, in an admittedly very inadequate way, I fell in love with another patient and we began helping each other."

o this same love of God, which is ealed in our human love, finds ression the world ever, sometimes he most desperate places. Some of American mission work is carried in the prisons of Japan. There, ere life has gone to pieces in de- ration, the love of Jesus Christ is de known and wholeness is restor- So that one prisoner on the way execution, instead of panic, pleads t others will heed God, and he gs as he goes. So that another con- mned man, at the point of execu- n, hands the pastor a single morn- -glory blossom, watered from the of his morning tea, with the re- est that it be planted and kept alive a symbol of hope for others similar- ly tempted to crime. These men, and others like them, do not go to pieces when life is desperate because they have discovered something of the love of God in the love of man which has, like a mighty cement, held their lives together.

Noah was a good man who went to pieces. We ought not to feel over-confident, for this could happen to any of us because of pressures, because of boredom, because of loss of purpose, because of loss of faith in the power and reality of love. But there are the inner braces of devotion to common duty, a fresh sense of purpose, and a new experience of the power of God's love.

OOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING from page 2

omforting the Afflicted" and "Af- ting the Comfortable." (Harper & others, 127 pp., $2.25)

Sermons Preached in a University urch by George A. Buttrick con- ns twenty-six sermons from his arvard University pulpit. Structural- speaking, the sermons are excep- nal, as we should expect, and rthy of homiletical study. But the rmons' appeal, by and large, is not form but in content. We do not find re sermons which are measured for e for Harvard or other undergrad- te students, for there is no real dif- rence in emphasis between a college any other audience. Rather the ok is meaningful because of the au- or's manner of matching human roblems and concerns of faith with thoroughgoing biblical emphasis. bingdon Press, 222 pp., $3.75)

A Private House of Prayer by Leslie . Weatherhead is a devotional book considerable value in the quest for e meanings and practice of prayer. he volume contains devotions for irty-one days. The days' medita- ons, scriptures, poems, and prayers e divided according to the rooms in hich we find the presence of God, praise and thank God, seek forgive- ness through confession, affirm our faith, purify our desires, intercede for others, and meditate. (Abingdon Press, 267 pp., $3)

Two new volumes, both on Mat- thew, have been added to William Barclay's Daily Study Bible Series. Few homiletic aids match the stim- ulating resources which these books offer, for in them the Scottish expos- itor combines the skills of interpreter and historian through lucid and mean- ingful comments and explanations ac- cording to a verse by verse pattern. Most of the passages are discussed homiletically, offering considerable substance for sermons and many pert- inent illustrations and quotations. Dr. Barclay's translation of Matthew is vigorous and appealing. (Westminster Press, 400 pages and $2.50 each)

Know Your Faith by Nels F. S. Ferre is much more than ar ordinary book on basic beliefs. It offers the theological concepts of Christianity as a language which reaches the minds of pastors and laymen without resort- ing to popular techniques and free from the obscurities of much theol- ogical writing. The manifold affirma-

tions of Christianity are presented in this book which is comprehensive but not condensed, elevating and persuasive but not didactic. (Harper & Brothers, 125 pp., $2.50)

Two companion volumes fill very practical needs for right interfaith thinking. **Interpreting Protestantism to Catholics** by Walter R. Clyde explains the common affirmations and shows the divergent witnesses regarding the Bible, the Church, salvation, worship, marriage, education, and other subjects. All this is done with a proper humility but with a clear statement of differences. This book will help Protestants to understand better both themselves and their Catholic neighbors. (Westminster Press, 160 pp., $3) **Understanding Roman Catholicism** by Winthrop S. Hudson is a guide to papal teaching for Protestants who wish to know the official Catholic interpretation and dogma regarding essential matters of faith. Much source material, presumably not readily available to Protestants, is included in this book which contains background interpretations that are free of bias. The author hopes his book will make possible a greater understanding between Protestants and Catholics — and this it surely may accomplish — yet it shows vividly the varying bases by which Christianity is affirmed. (Westminster Press, 192 pp., $3.50)

WORTH QUOTING from page 2

what you believe. That word creed incidentally, comes from the Latin verb "credo," which means, literally, "I believe."

Such a statement is vital to the faith of any man — and it is especially vital to the faith of a Christian. It is not enough to believe vaguely, without intelligent expression and action. People with a "faith" like that usually find the "faith" gone with the first wind. It just doesn't stick. William M. Hunter in **God and You** (Revell)

* * *

Democracy is an act of faith based on the capacity of men and women to follow the truth once they see it. Democracy can die by default if it is not consciously fostered. Mark Starr

* * *

There were two people crucified on either side of Christ.

One was selfish, self-centered and egocentric in character. He cared little whether the central figure on the cross — Christ — was guilty or not. All that mattered to him was his own predicament. His feelings were quite smiliar to the sentiments of some people today.

The other malefactor on the cross was, however, quite different. He was repentant and fully aware of his guilt. His main concern was for his soul and for the stablishment of Christ's innocence. No selfishness here, no personal aggrandizement, only consideration for justice, the welfare of others, and the magnifying of that which was good and pure!

Naturally enough, it was only the latter transgressor who received forgiveness and this comforting response from Christ: "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Only the unselfish repentant, therefore, received the assurance of forgiveness and the promise of the eternal life.

Almost every church has both kinds of people in it. Those who believe only because they think it benefits them, and those whose attitude, particularly when they stand next to the Cross at Calvary, is one of beneficence, self-sacrifice, and goodness toward the work of Christ. E. J. Meurer

* * *

Christian love has no eyes,
but it can see a world in need;
It has no hands,
but it can reach out to our brothers'
supplication;

has no feet,
but it can cross the barriers of class
and creed and color.
Man manifests this love by his gifts
as he gives offerings and tithes to
God's Kingdom.

Cyril Hicks

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If there is one thing which I have learned at the United Nations it is that the sense of justice is very much the same in every man. Regardless of whether he comes from Asia, Africa, Europe or America, he has very much the same idea of fair play as his fellow man who may come from a country 10,000 miles away. That sense of justice is expressed in one way or another in almost all governments — except the Communist government which knows not the meaning of the word. Yet even the individual Russian appears to be born with a sense of fair play, however much his government may suppress it. The future of the world depends on the extent to which we can base international relations on that sense of justice and fair play which is in every human heart. On this alone can we build a durable peace.

Henry Cabot Lodge

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There are times when we need to pull on the oars with all our might, but there are other times when we need to let our oars rest on the bottom of the boat while we sit completely relaxed beneath the stars of God; and we will find that there are deep-moving tides of the spirit carrying us along. Edwin T. Dahlberg

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Infantile love follows the principle: "I love because I am loved." Mature love follows the principle: "I am loved because I love." Immature love says: "I love you because I need you." Mature love says: "I need you because I love you." Erich Fromm in **"The Art of Loving"**

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It is not those who work for us that we love most. The friends who need us count more than those we need . . . Thus love for God will have reached its climax when it no longer expresses need; when we are so at one with ultimate Reality as not to be believing, but "living God." Aelred Graham

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A mid-western church member, critical of his pastor, and who had regularly given $1 a week to the church, was persuaded to experiment with tithing — giving one tenth of his income to the church.

After three Sundays, he told the pastor how much his sermons were improving.

Two months later he accepted the post of trustee and began to spend many hours in doing the business of the church.

After six months had gone by, he became so interested in the church that he persuaded more of its top business men to try tithing.

In one year, a church which had been suffering from an "average" program found itself operating an astonishingly expanded work on a budget tripled because one man tried tithing.
—From "Take a Look at Tithing"

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Actually, we must lose ourselves in order to find true and enduring happiness. This means that we must rise above self-consciousness. After all, self-consciousness is just another term for self-centeredness. It means that we are putting ourselves first in our thoughts and feelings, and letting everyone else come second. This is not practicing good will, but working for a reward.

There is no self-consciousness in good will. It flows from our hearts, naturally and spontaneously, without calculated forethought. It expresses itself in understanding and tolerance and a desire to share with others without thought of any return.

It was not until I glimpsed this picture that I realized that the trouble was with me, not with the world. I was giving myself with a string of self-consciousness attached. I wanted,

if not a reward of gratitude, at least sure-fire acceptance of the gifts of myself, at my own evaluation of them.

"How silly!" I told myself. "Instead of expressing my good will I am expecting my good works to earn a quick and certain reward in the form of smug satisfaction in having done good deeds. I am really trying to get, not to give."

It was then that I came to realize that giving-away is not merely a series of implusive acts but a continuing process of sowing seeds of good will. — David Dunn

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We're all busy. We all have our professions and pursuits and other obligations, and time is limited. Benjamin Franklin observed that time is the very "stuff life is made of." It doesn't matter what else we have — talent or money or anything else if we don't have time all the rest doesn't amount to very much. And the passing of time is one of the frightening things of life, or would be if it weren't for the assurance of eternity.

If we start counting when we are born, and live to be 70, we have some 613,000 hours from the time we breathe our first breath in this life until we reach threescore and ten. In that length of life there are only so many things we can do, only so many things we can join, only so many causes we can serve, only so many lives we can touch person to person.

And so I have acquired an acute conscience about taking time from other men's lives, as well as from my own . . . No organization has a right to exist solely for its own sake. No organization has a right to take man's time except as it lifts men's lives . . . Tennyson said: "I am part of all that I have met." Something of all of us rubs off on all of us . . . We do well when we give time and service — and ourselves — to help the cause of human happiness and peace and progress and understanding.

Richard L. Evans

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The **New Yorker** . . . published a cartoon showing a tribal chieftain stepping into the middle of a circle of his morally underprivileged subjects, who were hungrily eyeing an unhappy-looking and securely bound explorer. The chief said simply and classically, "But, first, our national anthem." Like a fairly common type of patriotism, there is also a kind of domesticated religion which, because of the social status of its clergy and the financial soundness of its institutions, is welcome at any tribal gathering. This is the problem of popular religion — of Christianity, too, when it becomes popular. How do we transmit the Word of God purified from social dross, from the mores and customs of society? . . . If our age evidences a disposition for faith, it is implicitly begging Christ's Church for clarification of the intellectual content of faith and for the example of true love. Robert Hovda